A Corpus-Based Study on the Translation of Causative Constructions in Chinese Diplomatic Discourse —Take "Ba" and "Shi" Sentence Patterns as Examples

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Abstract

With the help of Shanghai International Studies University's Comprehensive Database of Chinese Diplomatic Discourse, this study examines the translation of causative constructions, "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns, in Chinese diplomatic discourse. It is found that the main constructions used in the translation of "ba" sentence pattern are "subject (corresponding to the agent) + general verb (corresponding to the verb <or verb phrase> following the patient) + object", "subject (corresponding to the agent) + causative verb + object + object complement", passive voice, and zero correspondence; The main constructions used in the translation of "shi" sentence pattern are "subject (corresponding to the agent) + general verb (corresponding to the verb <or verb phrase> following the patient) + object", "subject (corresponding to the agent) + causative verb + object + object complement", "subject (corresponding to the patient) + notional verb + object", and "subject (corresponding to the agent) + general verb (corresponding to "shi")+ object". In Chinese diplomatic discourse, the translation of the "ba" sentence pattern is related to the choice of the agent, the complexity of the patient, the strength of the verb etc. of the original text; The translation of "shi" sentence pattern is related to the number of agents, the clarity of agency, the restoration of the original sentence structure, and the simplicity of the translation. Behind the translation phenomenon, there are not only internal factors such as linguistic differences between Chinese and English, linguistic features of causative constructions, and translation universals, but also external ones such as stylistic characteristics of diplomatic discourse, cognitive factors, and pragmatic needs.

Keywords: *Chinese Diplomatic Discourse; Causative Constructions; Corpus-Based Translation Studies; "ba" Sentence Pattern; "shi" Sentence Pattern.*

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the major concerns of research on Chinese is the sentence patterns that exist only in Chinese, such as "ba" sentence pattern, "de" sentence pattern, "bei" sentence pattern, "shi" sentence pattern etc. It is because of the uniqueness that the translation of sentence patterns between Chinese and English has long been favoured in translation studies. In recent years, with corpus tools, relevant translation studies have been quite fruitful.

Many studies focus on "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns, unique in Chinese, both of which are of causative meanings (Guo 2004). Construction pairs form and meaning (Goldberg 1995:4). Therefore, both belong to causative constructions. The basic structure of the former is "ba + object (target) + verb (narration)" (Lv 2002). "Ba" was originally a verb, but in "ba" sentence pattern, it is used as a grammatical component. "Ba" in "ba" sentence pattern undergoes grammaticalization, from lexical to grammatical meanings (Narrog & Heine 2021: 1; Hopper & Traugott 2003: 18). The basic structure of the latter is "agent (NP1) + shi + agent

(NP2) + presenting a certain state or result (V)", indicating that "due to A, B becomes the state described by C" (Guo 2004; Xue 1994). Unlike "ba" which changes from a verb to a preposition, "shi" has been used as a verb since ancient times, but its meaning has changed. According to *Origin of Chinese Characters* in the Eastern Han Dynasty in ancient Chinese, "shi" means "to give orders or to dispatch". But in modern Chinese, Lv (1999: 494-495) summarized the meaning of "shi" in his *800 Words of Modern Standard Mandarin* as "to order, to call, to use, or to cause". Hence, from old to modern Chinese, the semantics of "shi" have become more abstract with its causative meaning enhanced.

Accordingly, "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns are causative constructions with the structure of "noun + ba/shi + noun + verb". Despite linguistic studies mentioned above, translation studies on them have rarely been touched upon. Therefore, with the help of Shanghai International Studies University's Comprehensive Database of Chinese Diplomatic Discourse, the study explores the English translation of "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns in Chinese diplomatic discourse, compares the differences and similarities between them, and explains the reasons behind it.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Research on the Translation of "Ba" Sentence Pattern

2.1.1 The Original English Text Corresponding to "Ba" Sentence Pattern

The "ba" sentence in Chinese corresponds to the caused-motion sentence in English (Zhou & Liu 2007). At the structure level, the "ba" sentence pattern corresponds to several specific English sentence structures. Relevant studies can be categorized into descriptive and prescriptive aspects. The descriptive studies mainly describe which English sentences are translated into "ba" sentence pattern. A general corpus analysis reveals that the "ba" sentence pattern mainly corresponds to SVO sentences with short verbs, adverbials or complements, and definite modifiers attached to objects (Hu & Zeng 2011).

An examination of *Gone with the Wind* and its translation also reaches similar conclusions, with three main sentence patterns corresponding to the "ba" sentence pattern: SVO, SVoO, and SVoC. In Shakespeare's plays, when the object is long or the constituents after the object are cumbersome, "ba" sentence pattern is usually chosen for translation (Hu & Cui 2016), and in the case of *Hamlet*, for example, "ba" sentence pattern as a translation corresponds to five sentence patterns: verb + object + prepositional phrase, verb + object + adjective/adverb/participle, verb + noun + noun/infinitive, verb + object, and passive structure (Hu 2009). In terms of the prescriptive studies, their main purpose is to summarize which English sentences should be translated as "ba" sentence pattern. For example, in the translation of English scientific and technical texts, the "ba" sentence pattern can be used to translate the perfect tense, passive voice, verbs with strong transitivity that require a complement, and complex sentences such as determinative phrases/clauses and compound sentences (Shen 2007).

2.1.2 Overall Use of "Ba" Sentence Pattern in the Translated Text

The research on the use of "ba" sentence pattern in the translated text is mainly about characteristics and reasons behind its use in English-Chinese translation, which can be divided into general and special levels.

The general level means the general characteristics of the "ba" sentence pattern in translated Chinese. In the translation from English to Chinese, the "ba" sentence pattern is most commonly used for cognitive and pragmatic reasons: the former is its unique cause, displacement, colloquialization, and correspondence with cause-movement clauses in English; the latter is its correspondence with nominalization, composite constituents, causality, and foregrounding in English (Zhou & Liu 2007; Deng 2012). Compared to the original Chinese, in translated Chinese, "ba" sentence pattern is used more frequently because it is more suitable for expressing complex and subtle meanings (Hu & Zeng 2011; Wang 2014).

The special level means the use of the "ba" sentence pattern in specific texts. For example, in the examination of Chinese translations of literary texts like *Hamlet* and *Gone with the Wind*, it is found that there is a high-frequency use of "ba" sentence pattern, and reasons behind this include cognition, syntax, pragmatic needs, and linguistic contact (Hu 2009; He & Zhou 2019).

2.2 Research on the Translation of "Shi" Sentence Pattern

The research on the translation of "shi" sentence pattern includes both English-Chinese and Chinese-English translation studies, but the research methods have undergone a shift from experience summarization to empirical research.

Initially, the study of the translation of "shi" sentence pattern was mainly based on experience summarization. There are both lexical and grammatical means in the translation of "shi" sentence pattern: the former includes verbs that can convey the meaning of "shi"; the latter includes adverbials that can express the meaning of "to cause" or "to be caused" (Tong 2002). When the "shi" sentence pattern is used as a translation, it can be used to translate English caused-motion sentences along with "ba", "shi", and "ling" sentence patterns; but the semantic difference between "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns is that the former emphasizes cause while the latter emphasizes cause and effect (Zhou & Liu 2007).

Later, with the introduction of corpus tools, translation studies based on large-scale parallel corpora began to emerge.

According to large-scale Chinese-English parallel corpora, it is found that there are mainly four types of translation for "shi" sentence pattern: translation into lexical causative structures, translation into syntactic causative structures, syntactic conversion, and special translation, among which the first two are the most common (Huang et al. 2017).

There are also studies on the original texts translated into "shi" sentence pattern. For example, in the study of Chinese translations of Shakespeare's plays, it is found that the frequency of "shi" sentence pattern in Liang's, Zhu's and Fang's translations is higher than that of the original Chinese plays, and the corresponding structures in the English texts are mainly of six types: periphrastic causative structure, lexical causative structure, noun/adjective/participle/prepositional phrase, clauses of "so....that", passive voice, and zero correspondences, behind which are reasons of both imagery schema and translation strategy (Hu & Cui 2016).

In the study of the Chinese translation of *Principles of Economics*, it is found that compared with Cao's version, Liang's version pays more attention to conveying the content of the original text, thus tending to translate the causative structure of the original text into "shi" sentence pattern (Wang & Yang 2018). For another example, according to the English-Chinese parallel corpus of TED Talk, "shi" corresponds to periphrastic, lexical, and morphological causative verbs, and there are seven main types of structures corresponding to "shi" sentence

pattern: SV(O)C, SVO, SVOA, SVP, SVO + INF, SVOA, and NP, with the frequencies from high to low (Liu & Li 2017).

In summary, this study finds that research on "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns is fruitful and deep. However, there are also some shortcomings: (1) Research attention is paid more to English-Chinese translation than to Chinese-English translation research; (2) Literary texts account for a higher proportion than texts of other fields; (3) Other perspectives except for linguistic ones are lacking. Therefore, the study is intended to investigate the English translation of "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns which are typical of causative constructions in Chinese diplomatic discourse to fill the gaps in the current research.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Research Steps

This study relies on Shanghai International Studies University's Comprehensive Database Platform of Chinese Diplomatic Discourse (also referred to as "Platform"), which covers diplomatic discourse corpora with more than 100 million types. However, only the Chinese-English parallel corpus is used in this study.

First of all, select the "Corpus" module in the Platform, and choose the "Chinese-English Parallel Corpus of Chinese Diplomatic Discourse" (also referred to as "Chinese Diplomatic Discourse Corpus") (see **Table 1** for the basic information).

Table 1: Basic Information of the Chinese-English Parallel Corpus of Chinese Diplomatic Discourse

Language	Type	Token	Type/Token Ratio	Standardised Type/Token Ratio
Chinese	59,748	3,729,165	1.60%	46.74%
English	55,816	5,026,161	1.11%	40.73%

Then, select "Word Frequency" in the function menu, select "Chinese" in the "Language" column, enter "把" and "使" in the "Keywords" column, and click "Search". The frequency of the words "把" and "使" are 2701 and 2369 respectively, both accounting for 0.04%. Then, select the words "把" and "使" in the "Word" column and choose "Index Row" to get the related Chinese-English parallel corpora. After elimination, there are 2624 and 2313 cases of "ba" and "shi" sentences left. Therefore, this study will examine the English translations of these sentences and summarize the constructions used in them.

3.2 Classification of Translations

After a preliminary reading of the index rows, this study categorizes the basic structures of translations and assigns abbreviations to these structures. First, there is a dichotomy according to whether there is a corresponding translation of the original construction; then, in the case of "correspondence", there is a dichotomy according to whether the subject of the translation is the agent or the patient of the original construction. As a result, there are three types of basic translations: "correspondence" where the subject is the agent of the original text (abbreviated as Construction A), "correspondence" where the subject is the patient (abbreviated as Construction B), and zero correspondence (abbreviated as Construction C). Then Construction A and Construction B are further divided according to aspects such as predicate selection (see **Table 2** and **Table 3**).

Table 2: Classification of Construction A

Verb Types	Construction	Acronym	Note
General Verb	General verb + Object	A1-1	The verb in the translation corresponds to the verb of the original text.
		A1-2	The verb corresponds to the overall meaning of the original construction.
		A1-3	The verb corresponds to "ba" and "shi"
		A1-4	The object is the nominalization of the verb in the original construction.
Causative Verb	Causative verb + Object + Object complement	A2	"Causative verbs" are restricted to "make", "have", and "let".

Table 3: Classification of Construction B

Voice	Construction	Acronym
Active voice	Notional verb (+ Object)	B1-1
	Link verb + Predicative	B1-2
Passive voice	Be Done	B2

3.3 Research Questions

Therefore, this study aims to answer the following three questions:

1) When Chinese diplomatic discourse is translated into English, what is the translation of the causative constructions of the original and what are its characteristics?

2) What are the similarities and differences of the construction shift between "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns?

3) What are the reasons and ideology behind the construction shift?

IV. FINDINGS

Taking into account the classification of translation in the previous section, this study examines the English translation of "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns in Chinese diplomatic discourse in an exhaustive manner (see **Table 4**).

According to Table 4, in general the corresponding constructions in the English translation of "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns are, in descending order of frequency, Construction A, B, and C.

Specifically, Construction A accounts for 78.12% and 55.39% respectively when corresponded with "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns, both of which are higher than the total frequency of the other two types of constructions. But the frequency of Construction A in "ba" sentence pattern is higher than that of "shi" sentence pattern.

When it comes to the subcategories of constructions, it is found that although there are both similarities and differences between the translations of the two. According to the frequency, the translated constructions can be divided into four echelons.

The first echelon is A1-1. Its proportion in the translation of both sentence patterns is the highest, 69.32% and 35.24% respectively, but the former is higher than the latter.

The second echelons for the translation of the two sentence patterns are not the same. For the "ba" sentence pattern, the second echelon is A2, B2, and C, accounting for 7.20%, 6.06%, and 4.88% respectively. For "shi" sentence pattern, the second echelon is A2, B1-1, and A1-3,

accounting for 14.96%, 14.05%, and 12.71% respectively. In the second echelon, only A2 is shared, and the frequency of the latter is two or more times higher than that of the former.

The third echelons for the translation of the two sentence patterns are also not the same. For "ba" sentence pattern, the third echelon is A1-3, B1-2, A1-4, accounting for 3.96%, 3.73%, and 3.16% respectively. For "shi" sentence pattern, the third echelon is A1-4, B1-2, and C, accounting for 7.44%, 5.97%, and 5.92% respectively. In the third echelon, only Construction A1-4 is shared, and the frequency of the latter is also higher than that of the former.

The fourth echelon is similar to the third one. For the "ba" sentence pattern, the fourth echelon is A1-2 and B1-1, with the proportion of 1.68% and 0% respectively. For the "shi" sentence pattern, the fourth echelon is B2 and A1-2, with the proportion of 3.72% and 0%. The fourth echelons are the rare cases of translations for both where no common construction is shared and each has a construction that is not found in the other as a translation.

Table 4: Correspondence between Two Causative Constructions and Three Types of Translation Constructions

Translation Construction		"Ba" Sentence Pattern		"Shi" Sentence Pattern	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Construction A	A1-1	1819	69.32%	815	35.24%
	A1-2	44	1.68%	/	/
	A1-3	104	3.96%	294	12.71%
	A1-4	83	3.16%	172	7.44%
	A2	189	7.20%	346	14.96%
Construction B	B1-1	/	/	325	14.05%
	B1-2	98	3.73%	138	5.97%
	B2	159	6.06%	86	3.72%
Construction C		128	4.88%	137	5.92%
Total		2624	100%	2369	100%

Next, this study will analyze them in depth with specific examples.

In the English translation of "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns in Chinese diplomatic discourse, there are some cases of no correspondence, accounting for 4.88% and 5.92% respectively.

However, it should be noted that "zero correspondence" is only formal rather than semantic (see **Example 1** & **Example 2**). In Example 1 and Example 2, the structure of the original text has been fundamentally changed, therefore regarded as "zero correspondence".

【Example 1】

【Chinese】亚投行发展要坚持高标准、高质量，把(Preposition)遵循国际通行标准(Gerund)、尊重普遍发展规律(Gerund)同(Conjunction)适应各成员自身发展的实际需要(Noun Phrase)有机结合起来(Verb Phrase)，创造国际发展合作最佳实践。

【English】High standard and high quality must be ensured in the development of the AIIB. While following international standards and respecting the general law of development, the AIIB should keep in mind the actual development needs of its members, thus creating best practices for international development cooperation.

【Example 2】

【Chinese】近两年来，由于美房地产市场持续下滑，借贷人违约率不断上升，导致银行无法收回贷款，坏账率越来越高，最终<u>使(Verb)次贷危机(Noun)于 2007 年 7 月(Temporal Adverbial) 全面爆发(Verb Phrase)</u>。

【English】In the previous two years, declining US real estate market and rising default on loan repayment led to increasing non-performing loans and, finally, <u>a full-blown sub-prime mortgage crisis in July 2007</u>.

In the translation of "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns, most cases are of correspondence. Two of them are "subject + notional verb (+object)" and "subject + link verb + predicative" structures with the subject corresponding to the original patient. Both can retain the sequential structure of the original construction, namely "noun (or patient) + verb" (see **Example 3**, **Example 4**, and **Example 5**). Between them, the latter is used in both sentence patterns. In Example 3, the underlined part of the original text is a special, "ba" sentence pattern with no subject. There is no subject before "把", and it is impossible to make up a unique subject (Li & Song 2024). But English is the "language of the rule of law" (Wang 1984: 35), emphasizing rigorous subject-predicate structure and formal logic. Therefore, the noun phrase or patient "人民生命和身体健康" became the subject of the translation, with "在首位" as the predicative. Similarly, the original text in Example 4 is treated in the same way.

However, the "link verb + predicative" construction which accounts for 3.73% and 5.97% in the translation of two sentence patterns is not common. What is relatively frequent and special is the "notion verb (+object)" construction, also unique to "shi" sentence pattern. In Example 5, the words before the underlined text are not only the formal agent but also the semantic prerequisite for causality, which makes them not suitable to be the subject of the translation. Therefore, the target text is reconstructed with the patient of the original, or "两国关系", as the subject.

【Example 3】

【Chinese】必须坚持<u>把(Preposition)人民生命和身体健康(Noun Phrase)放在首位(Verb Phrase)</u>，不能将经济政治利益等其他考量凌驾其上。

【English】<u>People's life and health must always be our first priority</u>, and they must not be preceded by economic, political or other interests.

【Example 4】

【Chinese】曾副主席高度评价两国关系，赞赏埃在台湾、人权等问题上坚定支持中国，表示愿深化和扩大双方在各领域的合作，<u>使(Verb)中埃(Noun Phrase)成为相互信任的好朋友和共同发展的好伙伴(Verb Phrase)</u>。

【English】Vice President Zeng spoke highly of the bilateral relations and appreciated Ethiopia's firm support to China on the questions of Taiwan and human rights. He expressed China's readiness to deepen and expand bilateral cooperation in all areas so that China and Ethiopia would become trustworthy friends and partners of common development.

【Example 5】

【Chinese】中方认为，中瑞应寻求双方利益最大汇合点，进一步扩大和深化合作，使(Verb)两国关系(Noun Phrase)健康、稳定、全面地(Adverbial)向前发展(Verb Phrase)。

【English】China holds that the two countries should seek to maximize their converging interests and further expand and deepen their cooperation so that their relations may enjoy a sound and steady growth on all fronts.

The passive structure in Chinese tends to be negative whereas the passive structure in English tends to be neutral (Xiao & Dai 2014). Thus with the patient in the original text as the subject in the translation, naturally there are cases of passive structures in translation (see **Example 6** and **Example 7**). In Example 6 and Example 7, the two underlined texts are also sentence patterns with no subjects. If they are translated in the active voice, it is also difficult to add a clear agent in the translation. So both are translated into the passive structure where the agent can be omitted and the original structure of "object (subject in the translation) + verb phrase" is retained. Li (2011), based on Chinese-English Conference Interpreting Corpus, English Original Press Conference Corpus, and Translated English Government Work Reports Corpus, finds that the frequency of passive structures in the two translation corpora is higher than that in the original corpus. However, in this study, the possibility of translating "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns into passive structures is not high (6.06% and 3.72% respectively). It shows that in the translation of causative constructions in Chinese diplomatic discourse, the agent is not to be deliberately hidden to avoid ambiguity, but only when the agent is unclear or difficult to clarify.

【Example 6】

【Chinese】让我们从自己、从现在做起，把(Preposition)接力棒(Object)一棒一棒(Adverbial)传下去(Verb Phrase)。

【English】Let us act now, start with ourselves, and make sure that the baton of conservation will be passed on.

【Example 7】

【Chinese】支持延长联合国刚果（金）特派团任期，并赞同根据刚果（金）和平进程实际需要，适时考虑制订联刚团撤出战略，使(Verb)联合国宝贵的维和资源(Noun Phrase)得到更有效、合理的使用(Verb Phrase)。

【 English 】 China supports the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and the adoption of an exit strategy for MQNUC in due time in light of the progress of the peace process in DRC so that <u>valuable UN peacekeeping resources will be put to best use</u>.

As mentioned above, it is generally recognized that both "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns are causative constructions. Therefore, verbs with causative meaning, namely causative ones like "make", "have", and "let", are the most suitable ones in the translation (see **Example 8** and **Example 9**). In Example 8, as the noun phrase "国际合作新典范" follows the verb phrase "打造成" as the construction objective of the object "亚投行", the noun phrase becomes an object complement in the translation and the causative verb "make" is used before the object. Similarly, in Example 9, since "成为" (in the sense of "become") is a weak verb, it is directly omitted in the translation of "make it a central mechanism in global development". The use of causative verbs in the translation can restore the structure of the original text. But it is more frequent in the translation of "shi" sentence pattern than that of "ba" sentence pattern, accounting for 14.96% in the former, and only 7.20% in the latter.

【Example 8】

【Chinese】第四，坚持开放包容，<u>把(Preposition)亚投行(Noun)打造成(Verb Phrase)国际合作新典范(Noun Phrase)</u>。

【English】Fourth, let us stay open and inclusive and <u>make the AIIB a new paradigm of multilateral cooperation</u>.

【Example 9】

【Chinese】...呼吁国际社会携手强化政治论坛的监督、整合和交流三大职能，<u>使(Verb)其(Pronoun)成为全球发展领域的核心机制(Verb Phrase)</u>。

【English】He also called on the international community to strengthen the three functions of the forum, namely monitoring, integration and communication to <u>make it a central mechanism in global development</u>.

However, causative verbs usually carry a sense of coercion, so general verbs are also used to translate "ba" or "shi" (see **Example 10** and **Example 11**), also more frequent in the translation of "shi" sentence pattern than that of "ba" sentence pattern, 12.71% in the former and only 3.96% in the latter.

In Example 10, as "ba" is combined with the weak verb "作为" (usually translated into "as" in English), "take" is used to translate "ba" even though its verb meaning in "ba" sentence pattern has disappeared. In Example 11, the word "help" is used to translate "shi".

In addition to "take" and "help", verbs like "enable" and "allow" are often used. Similar to the use of causative verbs, the structure of such translations can also restore the structure of the original.

【Example 10】

【Chinese】作为当今世界最大的发展中国家，中国仍然要<u>把(Preposition)自身发展(Noun Phrase)</u>作为执政兴国的第一要务(Verb Phrase)。

【English】China, as the world's largest developing country, will continue to <u>take its development the top priority in governance</u>.

【Example 11】

【Chinese】四是本着可持续发展理念开展基础设施建设，<u>使(Verb)非洲(Noun)既(Conjunction)能实现经济快速发展(Noun Phrase)，又(Conjunction)能保护生态环境(Noun Phrase)</u>，做到既有金山银山又有绿水青山。

【English】Fourth, promote infrastructure development with a view to sustainable development to <u>help Africa realize rapid economic development and protect its ecological environment at the same time,</u> or in other words, enjoy not only wealth and prosperity but also clear water and green mountains<u>.</u>

In most cases, general verbs are used in the translation, but there is some consideration in the choice of verbs and objects. Verbs in the original text are often retained in the translation, but their functions in the translation may be different, either predicate (see **Example 12** and **Example 13**) or object (see **Example 14** and **Example 15**). In Example 12 and Example 13, the active voice of the original text is retained. With the verb put before the object, the ordinary English order is made.

The translation structure is concise and clear, therefore accounting for the majority (69.32% and 35.24% respectively in the two sentence patterns). In Example 14 and Example 15, "有机融合" and "得到发展" are nominalised as "synergy" and "development" respectively, with verbs "enhance" and "ensure" added. The use of nominalisation is more frequent in the "shi" sentence pattern than in the "ba" sentence pattern, with a frequency of 12.71% and 3.96% respectively.

【Example 12】

【Chinese】要坚持与邻为善、以邻为伴的方针和睦邻、安邻、富邻的政策，<u>把(Preposition)加强双边友好(Gerund)与(Conjunction)加强区域合作(Gerund)结合起来(Verb)</u>。

【English】China should keep up its policy of "building good - neighborly relationships and partnerships" and "contributing to an amicable, peaceful and prosperous neighborhood", and <u>combine efforts to promote bilateral friendship with those to strengthen regional cooperation</u>.

【Example 13】

【Chinese】缔约方还认识到，这些机制的设计应<u>使(Verb)其环境收益(Noun Phrase)最大化(Verb)</u>，同时避免对贸易构成不必要的障碍。

【English】The Parties also recognise that those mechanisms should be designed in a manner that <u>maximises their environmental benefits</u> and avoids the creation of unnecessary barriers to trade.

【Example 14】

【Chinese】同时<u>把(Preposition)交通走廊和经济走廊建设(Noun Phrase)有机融合(Verb Phrase)</u>，充分释放互联互通振兴经济、改善民生的潜力。

【English】We should also <u>enhance the synergy between the development of transportation corridors and that of economic corridors</u> to fully leverage their role in boosting the economy and improving people's lives.

【Example 15】

【Chinese】博方赞赏中国为解决非洲地区冲突所发挥的积极作用，高度评价中国政府倡议建立的中非合作论坛机制，感谢中国政府多年来向博提供的各种援助，表示愿与中国共同努力，深化合作，<u>使(Verb)两国关系(Noun Phrase)不断得到发展(Verb Phrase)</u>。

【English】The Botswanian side commended the positive role played by China in resolving regional conflicts in Africa and thanked the Chinese Government for its assistance of various kinds. The Botswanian side spoke highly of the establishment of the mechanism of Forum on China-Africa Cooperation initiated by the Chinese Government and expressed its readiness to work with the Chinese side to <u>ensure continuous development of the bilateral relations through stronger cooperation</u>.

In addition, there is another case which is unique to "ba" sentence pattern. That is, the verb in the translation is the summarization of the structure of "ba + noun + verb" (see **Example 16**). In Example 16, "look to" is the generalization of the overall meaning of the underlined words. However, it is not in the majority of cases and only occurs in expression like "把目光投向" (literally translated as "set sights on").

【Example 16】

【Chinese】因此，各方日益<u>把(Preposition)期待的目光(Noun Phrase)投向(Verb)</u>，希望我们为推动世界经济复苏增长、促进全球治理体系变革发挥更大的作用。

【English】Therefore, more people are <u>looking to China</u> to play a greater role in driving the recovery and growth of the world economy and moving forward the reform of global governance system.

To sum up, "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns are of causative meaning and share similar structures. In the English translation of them in Chinese diplomatic discourse, despite the similarity in the types of translations, there's also a distinctive difference in the frequency and distribution of translations. The main constructions used in the translation of the "ba" sentence pattern are Construction A1-1, Construction A2, Construction B2, and Construction C; The main constructions used in the translation of "shi" sentence pattern are A1-1, Construction A2, Construction B1-1, and Construction A1-3. Moreover, constructions used in the translation of "shi" sentence pattern are more evenly distributed than those of "ba" sentence pattern. The translation of the "ba" sentence pattern is related to the choice of the agent, the complexity of the patient, the strength of the verb etc. of the original text; The translation of the "shi" sentence pattern is related to the number of agents, the clarity of agency, the restoration of the original sentence structure, and the simplicity of the translation.

V. DISCUSSION

This study argues that there are multiple reasons behind the English translation of causative constructions represented by "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns in Chinese diplomatic discourse.

1) Linguistic differences between Chinese and English. It is widely acknowledged that English is hypotactic while Chinese is paratactic. Run-on sentences are typical in Chinese and understanding them depends on the context (Fowler 2009: 504; Nisbett 2011). "Ba" and "shi" sentence patterns belong to run-on sentences. Therefore, when translated into English which has a well-developed formal logic, they need to be reorganized to conform to the basic sentence structure of English. Moreover, Chinese is verb-dominant and usually, so there are many verbs in one sentence. On the contrary, there are more prepositions and nouns than verbs in an English sentence. So the former is dynamic and the latter is static (Pan 1997: 375-382). In "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns, there may be multiple verbs or gerunds. But in their translations, usually only one verb is used. Sometimes verbs in the original text are nominalised and collocated with weak verbs such as link verbs to make the event a fact, state, or nature, turning Chinese dynamics into English staticity. In addition, the frequency of translation where subjects correspond to patients of the original text has increased, which is related to the linguistic habit of English, non-personal subjects. It allows events to be presented more objectively (Lian 2010: 105).

2) Linguistic features of causative constructions. As mentioned above, both the agent and the patient in "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns can be the subject in the translation, which is mainly due to the unique relationship between the patient and the following verb. From the perspective of SFL, the verbs and nouns in the two sentence patterns can be analyzed through ergative analysis which emphasizes cause and effect. Ergativity is characterized by the fact that the subject of a verb which is both transitive and intransitive can also be its object (Halliday 1994:167; Bosseaux 2007:48-51). It is because of the ergativity between patients and the following verbs in some "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns that both agents and the patients can be subjects in the translation. However, although both sentence patterns can express causality and present a complex event structure, the latter represents the

combination of two sub-events and has a weaker causality while the former represents the complex events both combined and nested and has a stronger causality (Guo 2008; Wu & Tian 2018). Therefore, the translation of the former is more flexible in subject choosing.

3) Translation universals, i.e. the linguistic features that the translated language exhibits universally concerning the original language (Blum-Kulka 2000: 221). Compared with the original language, the translated language tends to follow and even exaggerate the typical patterns in the target language (Baker 1996). They can be embodied through translation strategies such as explicitness, implicitness, simplification, standardization, and source language shining through (Pang & Wang 2021). In the translation of Chinese diplomatic discourse, it is mainly manifested in the last three aspects. Simplification and standardization are mainly embodied in the structure of "general verb + object" in the translation to avoid the complexity affecting the readability of the translation. Source language shining through refers to the features of the translated text that are close to those of the source language (Teich 2003: 145-146). Although there are many changes in the form, syntax, and verbs in the process of translation, the translations are still characterized by their closeness to the original text, including the correspondence between subjects of the translation and agents of the original text, the relevance of predicates and objects of the translation to verbs and patients of the original text.

4) Stylistic features of diplomatic discourse. As mentioned above, in the Chinese translation of *Hamlet*, no matter which version, the main structure corresponding to "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns is "verb + object", and the main difference is the content after the object. In this study, we find that the main construction corresponding to the two sentence patterns in Chinese diplomatic discourse is "verb + object", but the main difference lies in the choice of verb. It can be seen that English constructions corresponding to the two sentence patterns are different when used as source and target languages. One inescapable factor is the stylistic difference between literary and political texts. *Hamlet* is a poetic drama, the language of which is both solemn and elegant and both witty and slang; Shakespeare makes his characters speak specially so that readers can substitute for the characters and identify with them (Wang 2014; Short 2013: 194). However, Chinese diplomatic discourse is characterized by solemnity and seriousness, which requires a distinctive stance and precise wording (Li & Hu 2009). Especially after the 18th National Congress, to further enhance China's soft power, Chinese diplomatic discourse strives for truthfulness and precision, requiring appeal and affinity (Fan & Wang 2021). Literary texts require the verb to be evocative while political texts require the verb to be precise. The translation of diplomatic discourse should aim at achieving political equivalence (Yang 2016), so the process of translation also needs to convey the stylistic features and image characteristics behind it. Therefore, despite the same structure of "verb + object", attention will be paid more to the selection and consideration of the verbs to realize the transmission of the style of Chinese diplomatic discourse and the image of China behind it.

5) Cognitive factors. Iconicity mainly refers to the logical connection between linguistic symbols and the concepts they represent, and it includes distance, order, and quantity at the syntactic level (Givón 1990: 967). The causative meaning of "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns cannot be separated from their order resemblance, i.e., the order of linguistic constituents corresponds to the order of events according to human experience and perception (Greenberg 1963: 73-113; Haimen 1980: 160-194). The two sentence patterns are characterized by the fact that the object precedes the verb. From the perspective of

information structure, the verb is mostly in the position of rheme. The theme is the starting point of the discourse and the known or recognized fact while the rheme is the core of the discourse, the speaker's interpretation of the theme, and all the information to be conveyed to the hearer (Mathesius 1939). So the sequential structure of "object + verb" reinforces the action in it, making the action and its result the focus of the message (Lu 2016). Similarly, when these two sentence patterns are translated into English, the information focus of the translation where the subject corresponds to the patient of the original text is on the verb or predicative. Therefore the order iconicity of the original text is restored to some extent.

6) Pragmatic needs. The translation of Chinese diplomatic discourse is an important expression of China's image, so it needs to be carefully considered in terms of word choice and sentence structure. The causative construction is often regarded as a kind of displacement schematic metaphor, which strengthens the semantic status and expressive role of the verb by highlighting the dynamic component of the displacement process (Zhang 2001). The a posteriori view of metaphor suggests that metaphors have a reinforcing and reconstructive effect on ideology (Boers 1997; Gibbs 1999; Boers & Littlemore 2003). Therefore, through "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns in Chinese diplomatic discourse, the determination of the Chinese government to take positive actions after setting up the goals is conveyed to reflect the practical image of the Chinese government. Therefore, the translation either adopts the common structure of "general verb + object" to emphasize the action directly, or takes the subject as the main language, and puts the verb in the position of rheme as the focus of the message. In addition, it should be noted that from the perspective of linguistic form, the construction of "causative verb + object + object complement" also conforms to the semantic structure of the original text. However, what the translator translates is not the linguistic form but the frame activated by the language (Snell-Hornby 1995: 81). Due to different cultural backgrounds and knowledge systems, the frames activated by language speakers through the language may also be different (Xiao 2013). Causative verbs tend to activate frames of compulsion, which are inconsistent with the intention of Chinese diplomatic discourse. They are therefore used only in a limited way, only to show determination to achieve a goal.

VI. CONCLUSION

With the help of Shanghai International Studies University's Comprehensive Database of Chinese Diplomatic Discourse, this study examines the translation of causative constructions, "ba" and "shi" sentence patterns, in Chinese diplomatic discourse. Although this study examines in detail the translation of the two sentence patterns in Chinese diplomatic discourse, causative constructions are not limited to them but also include "de" sentence pattern, "ling" sentence pattern, resultative, etc., which need to be further explored in future studies.

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